2009
SPECTRUM

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Makeshift Words in the Form of Melody

Kayla Richardson

Hearts swarm to the words on the mill.
So many voices for such a little lie;
Faces blur as the sentences form,
And every single voice defends and denies.

Hearts break with the consonants and vowels.
Some sense of melancholy shakes itself now;
As fear sets in, and anger sets out.
A blood hunt for the words blown about…

Heart's revenge the paragraphed tales;
Insected in holes once thought as friends.
Plagued by a bittersweet horror fest,
Where the word play on emotional bends.

What was, and what now is.
What will now forever be?
A few mixed up words in a few lines,
Mush them up and speak them clean.

Shower Musings

Bethany Shurer

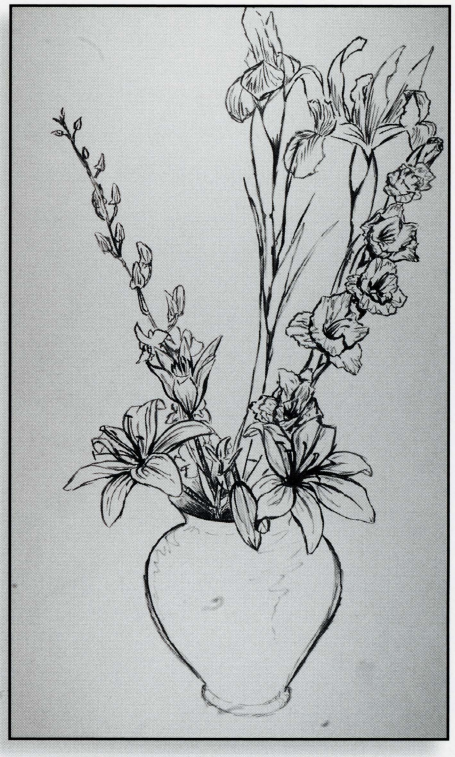
Writer's block: your third least favorite thing to a writer behind writer's cramp and writer's clog (where everything just gets stuck and comes out pure putrescence). You don't know what to write, and anything that comes out sounds forced and repulsive. Your heart isn't in it, and everyone else can tell.

Do you write about your third house, the one you basically grew up in? Maybe, but what can you say about it? It was white. The driveway was white, the outside of the house was white, the inside of the house was white. Even the dog was mostly white. No. That's too much white to write about.

How about Peter's shirt? That's white. But mostly it's the smell. His smell. But you've never been good with smells. No.

What about your favorite pair of shoes? Your tap shoes! They smell too, but since it's not really a pleasant smell, it's good that you can't describe their smell. They're not white, so that's definitely an improvement. They're soft, black leather, well worn, and well loved. You could talk about the scratches on the aluminum taps. You could tell how each scratch was created by different steps, each mastered with time, effort, and strength. Of course, you also had to learn how to shut down your mind so your head wouldn't get in the way of your feet. You know you were thinking "Why am I doing something that could break at least four different parts of my body if I don't even look cool while doing it?" Yes. That sounds like a good topic, but somehow, the words just refuse to come.

Maybe you need to go in a completely different direction. You think you could write about annoyances. You're very annoying; therefore, you're easily annoyed. And you know how one annoying person can lead to the aversion of the word 'aquamarine.' But you're not a mean person, and fits of rage just aren't your thing.

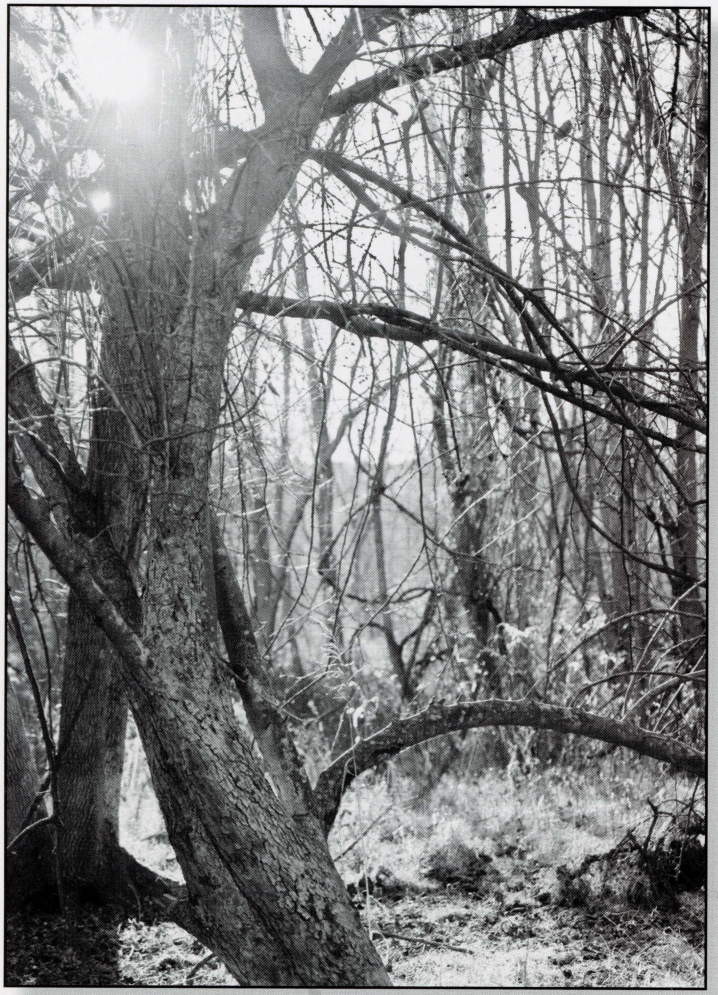


Kate Botsford-

So you go home for the weekend and admire your Technicolor house. While in the shower, you remember how much you hate writer's block and the feeling of not knowing what to write. It doesn't happen often. Usually words flow from your fingers like water from a fountain. Not from a fountain clogged by gum, allowing only for a small trickle of water to flow. But as you lather, rinse, and repeat, you realize that your worst enemy has just become your best friend. What do you know better than the workings of your own mind, even when congested?

Wishful Ticking

Justin Switzer



-Eric Bach

The door of my mind opens
And an image of grim terror fills my thoughts
Rounding the corner, comes the clock's chime

Tick, Tick, Dong

Twelve times to the window
It beats to shatter glass
Nails creaking against gloomy black

The raindrops trickle
In my head, forming a river
Flooding every thought of mine

Pools of red form behind my eyes

From the death of dreams
That I have yet procured

Nighttime horrors, screams
Unkempt hairs,
With marionette strings

The creeping, fondling
Of things not yet known.
To lose oneself
To the unknown

To reach that blissful
Wondrous place
The things that dreams
Are made of

I will not seem dead
To life

But the clock still chimes

SLIPSTREAM

ROBIN FARRELL

Faces disappear.
Armor emerges.
Powerful instruments
That carry us from
One place to another
Through a haze
Of Metal,
Of Rubber,
And of Glass.

A Slipstream
Of Colored Sparks
In a Universe of tiny dots;
A million glowing pinpricks
That illuminate the dark.

Palpable metal,
Thick, viscous steel
Flexed back
Into living art,
Smooth and weightless,
Glossy and Elegant.

My hands ache to grip
The leather helm,
To feel the pipes
Rumble to life.

I want to remember
The sensation of sheer power
All around me,
Both within my metal armor
And without.

I need new means
To move forward,
To adventure out into
This War Zone, This Ballroom,
Both a Battle and a Waltz,
A Challenge in each regard.

But here's my gauntlet
And I've clashed it to the floor.
I want to dive in
To that pool of motion,
That array of illumination,
That Slipstream
Of Colored Lights.

-Vy Vu

FRIDA

GINA FERRARA

I cannot describe
pain that is eternal,
or intensities of orange and yellow
that drench the world
in recognition
of your Mission.
Lines and shapes
and a diary of honesty
overwashed with color,
overworked with muse.
Bars of steel correct your body
but do not bar the brain
there are
endless thoughts and hearts
and tears and organs
and soulless eyes
all painted on your living canvas
beauty made by suffering.

-Megan Porter

For Why the Bell Does Not Toll

Stephen Carnaggio

It was the beginning of yet another average day for Jonathan Carnegie. He got up from bed, took his shower, shaved, got a quick bite to eat and kissed his wife good-bye for the day.

John worked at a furniture store in the city. It wasn't exactly the career of his dreams, but it paid well enough and he enjoyed it. He was hoping that things would not be too busy tonight so that he could get home quickly. Days like this seemed to drag on for hours.

He pulled up to the store and parked his car, stepping out and sighing at the heat from the warm summer day. Entering the small furniture store, he could hear the tingle of the bells that rang whenever someone came inside.

Tingle Tingle

The man already at the floor was helping some customers make a selection, when he heard the door and turned around. He smiled and waved to John. The two were friends, but they weren't too close. They really just knew each other as coworkers. As he walked in, he heard the distinct sound.

Tingle Tingle

Another customer was coming in, time to think up a pitch. They were having a sale on dining sets, and the tables were set up on display as if people were ready to eat there. He thought about having a table like that for him and his wife, and possibly some kids. But for now, all he could do was sell them. John put on his "salesman face" and turned to help the new customers.

It was getting near the end of the day and John was looking forward to getting home. He and his coworker watched the elderly couple that remained in the store. The two were checking out one of the sets close to the register. The man gingerly held his wife's hand as she eagerly pointed out the things that she liked. John was thinking about his wife again and his mind drifted to what would happen when he got home after a long day's work. He was hungry.

John was lost as he watched the couple, so he almost didn't hear it.

Tingle Tingle

Looking up, John saw something he would not soon forget, and something he recognized all too well. His life growing up in Baltimore gave him an education his ill-used degree would never give him. These young "gentlemen" of the upstanding community probably didn't want furniture. Each of them wore a ski mask and carried a sawed-off shotgun. The one in the middle, the apparent leader, raised his gun and shouted orders to the four people in the store: "All right, everyone to the ground, NOW!" John was not about to question them. He did as they said.

With his face floorward, he could feel the crooks going through his pockets, but could not see anything past the sides of his eyes. Suddenly he could feel his hand being jerked from its position and he watched in horror as his college ring was ripped from his finger.

"I can't get this off, man!" one of the robbers yelled from the side. John dared not look to see who they were talking about, but he knew it was the old couple.

He could hear the old woman crying as the men were doing something to her. "What's with her? This ring ain't coming off!" It was one of the robbers speaking.

"Then cut her finger off!" their leader did not sound amused. "She won't be needing it where she's going."

There was a pause then the other crook added with a bit of a laugh, "No witnesses then?"

"No witnesses."

"So how should we go about…" their voices trailed off from John's thoughts. He was going to die, they all were going to die. He was going to be killed by some street punks, in this small store, after leaving the city behind.

His eyes caught something on the floor as he felt a gun barrel press against the back of his head. A box cutter was lying exposed on the ground, probably from when John was helping find something that was shipped earlier. If he wasn't the first one they killed, he was going to make sure one of them was the second. His plan began to formulate in his head. If someone else was shot first, he would grab the box cutter, spin around to stun his assailant, and slash the neck of the guy behind him. It was quick and simple and it would at least take one of them down to spite them. After all, was there anything else he could do at this moment?

His concentration was broken by the feeling of a hand holding a firm grip on his. It was his coworker. The man began to say something, "Dear Lord, please deliver us from this trial." The man next to John, the man he knew from work, was praying.

"Forgive these young people for what they are doing and bring us safely from harm," the old couple began, their hands clasped together on the floor.

Could it be? At this point in time, when their lives were forfeit, these people were praying? What good would it do; miracles don't happen, not in this day and age at least. He looked at the box cutter one last time and did something he didn't think he would: "Dear Lord, please protect us and save us."

Through their prayers they could not hear anything; the sounds seemed to mix together and the only thing that was distinct was their words echoing in their minds.

It happened so quickly that he couldn't be sure what had happened. One moment there was a gun to his head, and the next minute there was nothing. He looked around, obviously confused. The elderly couple stood up slowly, the old man comforting his wife. John's coworker stood up as well. They all looked around but there was no sign of the three men. "Was it all just some kind of nightmare?" John thought to himself, fiddling with his finger. He noticed that his ring was gone. Whatever happened was very real.

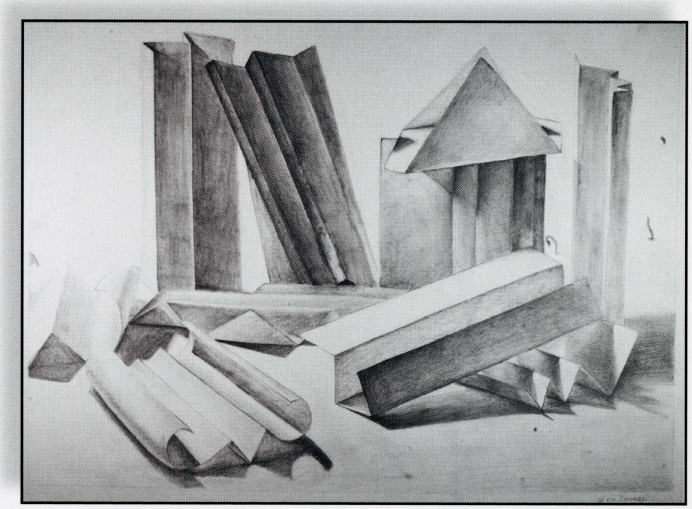
"What happened?" he asked. "Where did they go?"

"I don't know…but did you hear…?" His coworker hadn't finished his sentence when John shook his head.

"No I didn't," and it was true. He kept his ears out for it as he was trained to do. He didn't know how the men left, but one thing was certain.

The bells did not ring.

BASED ON A TRUE STORY



-Kate Botsford

Liberty and Justice for All

Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

You can't hear her, but still she screams.
A jagged blade creases the skin
on the small of her back
as the man unzips his humanity.
Three men in the corner with her only daughter
would make her rebel if she could
not hear the calls from more hyenas outside.
Her flesh tears apart.
Her blood christens his boots.

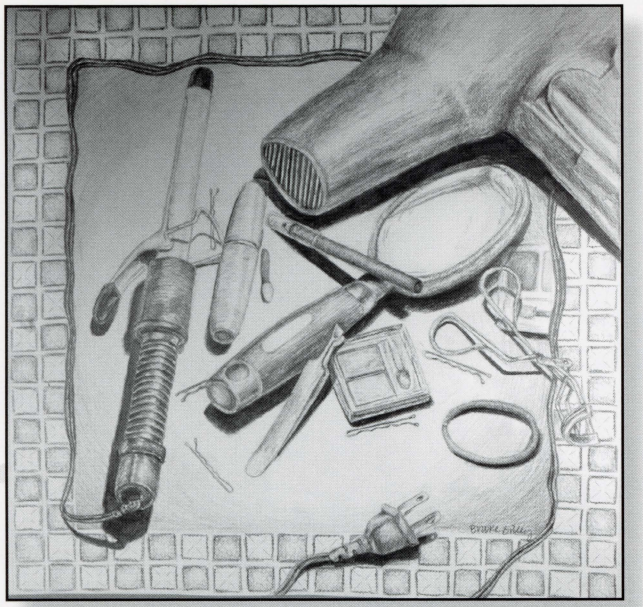
Years ago, Eisenhower swore, "Never again."
Now, America's taxes analyze cow shit
widening the hole in the ozone layer
while hundreds
of thousands
are raped and slaughtered in Darfur.

-Andrew Mangum

Watch

Virginia Petrucci

I never wear a watch because I hate to know
that I age.
Each second, a layer shed,
a tumor grown.
Ticking next to my ear
listen and hear
the order of time
please sir, *quelle heure est-il*?



-Brooke Gilley

Jessica Rudolph-

The Sea Fairies

Megan Johnson

Sailors
Bind thy heart before thy departure
Hold fast to those thou wouldst leave behind
Keep thy memories of the joys of land close
For 'tis not the sea
That threatens to steal thy heart

Wives
Weave thy love to anchor thy man
Never forget when he answers the call of the sea
To hold him close, to embed thyself in his mind
For 'tis not the sea
That calls thy man to leave

Sons
Listen to the foreboding stories told to thee
Search for another trade to live
Follow not in thy father's shoes
For 'tis not the sea
That would drown thy life

Daughters
Learn from the mistakes of thy mother
Be careful to choose a man of the land to love
Marry not a hunter of the water
For 'tis not the sea
That will break thy heart in two

RIDEWORLD

DAVID BRANNON

Three men push the heavy metal hangar doors open with creaks, groans and reverberations of decades of weight and rust on tired hinges. The noise disturbs roosting birds on the hangar's curved roof and chases them away with a light flutter of wings into the rising mist of a Florida November morning. The doors secured, the three pull the red, open cockpit, fabric-covered biplane into the morning light and begin the ritual of its preparation for the day's work. For this is no pampered antique, looked at from a distance and known only indirectly from books and museums. This sixty-year old earns its keep every day, giving tourists nostalgic thrill-rides over golf courses, amusement parks, lakes and beaches.

Freddie, the owner, chief pilot, mechanic and salesman, has a politician's smile and an opportunist's eye. His skin and hair bleached from years in the Florida sun, he surveys the crowd gathering to tour the aviation museum across the ramp from his shady sales hut. The hut, locally referred to as the Tiki Hut, is designed to be an inviting oasis of shade attracting the tourists into becoming a captive audience for the sales pitch. Sally and Jill 'man' the hut since Freddie discovered that wives are the main reason men don't buy a ride in his airplane. But the wives will buy a ride if sold by a woman. He doesn't pretend to understand the political correctness, he simply recognizes the marketing truth and is grateful to take advantage of it.

The saleswomen counter every objection for the wives not to ride along with the husbands. And they keep up a light and playful patter as the tourists pass through the deck of the Tiki Hut.

"It's too hot to fly."

"We have this really big fan out front to cool you off."

"It's too cold to fly."

"We have this really big engine out front providing heat and these fashionable, authentic leather jackets to keep you toasty-warm."

"Is such an old airplane safe?"

"Sure it is. We almost always bring back the same number of people we leave with."

"But it's all open."

"That's true. But if you can't get bugs in your teeth when you fly, well, why bother going at all?"

"I don't want to wear a helmet."

"OK, but you'll come back with a hairstyle by hand grenade."

"Is it safe for my children?"

"Of course it is. But it costs extra to not bring teenagers back."

The crew performs the morning preflight checks and inspections for oil level, tire pressures, fuel, and general condition of the airplane, a 1940 Waco (wah-co) model UPF, used as a military primary trainer during World War Two. A special ritual is 'pulling the engine through': rotating the prop at least seven times to assure no oil has settled into one of the seven cylinders overnight that could cause hydraulic locks. Such an innocent sounding event could crack a cylinder or bend a piston rod upon starting the engine, a twelve thousand-dollar noise. The six hundred and seventy cubic-inch Continental radial engine requires four gallons of oil and burns thirteen gallons of fuel an hour. The old engine seems to leak as much oil as it burns and the crew spends hours massaging the airplane with shop towels to remove the black streaks from the red fuselage.

"Radial engines always mark their parking spots to keep the spam-cans away," Freddie tells his customers that comment on the ever-present oil stain beneath the engine. "When a radial engine stops leaking oil, then you're in trouble."

Today, the museum is expecting a big turnout for its Veteran's Day celebration. Local veteran groups received special invitations, minor politicos will speak, and many of the World War Two airplanes are out on the ramp, washed and waxed,

ready for inspection in the warming sunshine.

The Waco, too, received special preparations. A good cleaning and wax, power wash for the engine making it sparkle, wiping down and extra metal polish for the chromed flying wires, and new windscreens for the front and back cockpits so the autumn air stays crisp-looking in flight. The crew knows all these preparations will disappear in a sheen of engine oil by the third flight, but they have a head start on keeping the airplane clean today. Freddie convenes a quick crew meeting before the traffic starts through the Tiki Hut.

"We have all hands present today because we have a big crowd and lots of opportunity for a busy day. It's going to be a long day, too, so I want everybody to spell each other for lunch, breaks and coverage. Doug and I will handle flying and help Jim with loading passengers and keeping the airplane clean. My wife will be over before lunch to spell Sally and Jill in the hut. We can expect the usual afternoon rain and there's a cold front moving in, we just don't know how the weather is going to cooperate.

"We're going to have an unusual number of 'civilians' out on the ramp, so let's be extra alert for people, especially kids, to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Safety is an absolute. Always escort the customers to and from the airplane, and walk them behind the airplane. Jim, make sure the area is clear before every engine start, and warn people standing behind the airplane to guard their eyes when the engine starts.

"Remember, anything over five rides is profit and we all share in that. So, lets have a good time and entertain the tourists into riding a lot."

Soon, the tourists congregate at the Tiki Hut and the rides begin.

And, as the airplane taxies away with father and child, one of the women turns to the waiting and anxious wife/mother and says, "You have the car and motel keys, don't you?"

More tourists ask, "Can my two boys ride alone in the airplane?" – "Can you fly over the hotel where we're staying?"– "You don't go upside down do you?" – "My wife won't ride with me. Can I pair up with another single?" – "It was fantastic." – "Better than I thought it would be." – "Can you take our picture beside the airplane?" – "Let me go get my other kids. They'll love this." – "The baby went sound to sleep as soon as the engine started!" – "This airplane costs $100,000?!" – "If I go by myself, is it half price?"

So it goes through the morning. The crew hears the same comments every day, but they remember it's the first time for the customers and keep it light and fresh and fun.

During the noon ride at fifteen hundred feet, Freddie sees the gathering darkness to the north. Growing towers of white clouds change to dirty gray then black on the bottoms. As they march slowly to the south, Freddie makes out the shafts of isolated rain showers marking the leading edge of the cold front.

"If the rain cells stay isolated, we can fly around them. Maybe the afternoon rain break won't be too long."

By one o'clock, eight rides were completed. Freddie was happy with a good day. As always, there was a mid-day slow down. The crew was sitting on the deck enjoying the break when the cold front arrived.

Everybody was watching the clouds moving in and the rain cells sliding across the area. The temperature dropped suddenly and everybody looked at each other as if to say, "Did you feel that?"

Then the wind picked up and began gusting, driving dirt and sand across the ramp. People spun around to defend themselves from the sandblasting, losing hats and sunglasses

CONTINUED...

to the gusts. Then the Waco started to weather-vane into the wind and roll backward. Doug was the first to see it and jumped off the deck, running toward the airplane. Everybody instantly followed, even some airplane savvy tourists.

"Oh, shit," Freddie muttered under his breath. Everybody was thinking exactly the same thing.

Doug grabbed the prop and dug his heals in to stop the roll. He only slowed it until the rest of the crew arrived and grabbed struts and wires. It took three people to stop the wayward Waco but five nudged it back to its parking place.

"Three inches of wood wheel chocks almost lost us an airplane," Freddie thought as he and Doug placed chocks in front and back of the main wheels.

With the rain imminent, Freddie, Doug and Jim covered the cockpits with a tarp to keep the inside dry. The crew settled down on the deck to wait out the rain and wind.

Two o'clock – no let up.

Three o'clock – still coming down.

Four o'clock – no end in sight.

Now, Freddie was just waiting for the rain to stop so he could push the airplane back into the hangar. He figured the day was over for rides, but eight wasn't bad for half a day.

There was a break in the clouds and the rain stopped, revealing the sun low in the western sky. Freddie and Jim checked that the tarp was still in place and there was no water inside the airplane. They began wiping water from the wings when an elderly man walked across the now deserted ramp. He nodded as he walked past the wings to the front of the airplane. He stood close by, inspecting the engine and the leading edge of the prop. Then he moved to the front of the wings, looking at the flying wire fittings, the aileron strut nuts and main strut fasteners.

Freddie saw the military thoroughness and the soft smile on the man's face. He was getting reacquainted with an old friend.

"After you finish the preflight, you want to fly her?" Freddie asked.

"Only if you put the stick in the front cockpit," the veteran replied.

"We can do that. Where'd you do your training?"

"Primary in Jax and advanced in Pensacola. Then I spent three months in Oklahoma beating up the countryside in tired P-40's."

Freddie knew the ritual. No pointed questions, don't push. Just invite the story out; let him tell as much as he wants.

"So, you spent World War II in Europe?"

"Yeah. Flew Jugs out of England before and after the Normandy invasion."

"Oh, close to the ground work."

"Sure was. I got credit for shooting down three trucks, six locomotives, and a bunch of river barges." He paused looking toward the setting sun, then said, "And four 109's."

Even the wind stilled with an appreciative silence as the two pilots understood the rest of the unspoken story. Freddie opened the baggage hatch and pulled out the control stick for the front cockpit.

"Let's go fly."

My Own Mountain

Kelli Thurman

Sliding down rolls of spun ice
Glistening in the sun
Then ices over to slickness in the night
Heel to toe
It's where I go
It's my special place
To erase, to space out
This is my place, to center myself
Put my problems on a shelf, out of my mind
Put them behind me, with my best friends next to me
Nature and trees surround me
I feel small, I feel it all
My surroundings are close to me
Bob and weave
Through the trees
I treasure these:
These days
These moments
These times
I feel they are mine, and mine to share
And as I breathe in the clean mountain air
I feel a release
I am at ease
On my own mountain.

I Sang

Gretchen Willoughby

I sang
Though in the pews of their churches
Singing wasn't allowed
Tea, crumpets, polite conversation
Scrubbing in sinks
To prevent God's complaints

I danced
Though in their dance halls
Only the waltz
Hands on ribs creating Eves
Prior to serpents
Never should another
Element touch

I voted
Though in their booths
The buttons hung low
Pressed by unzipped fingers
But today
Their zippers jammed
And my candidate overcame

I legislated
Though their congress was rigid
For missionaries to adore
I vetoed
With presidential overrides
Tonight, I was on top.

AUSCHWITZ

MAURA BERNSTEIN

On July 4, 2006, many Americans were celebrating Independence Day in the comfort of their own homes, remembering war heroes, and those who died to give us our freedom. I was not celebrating, nor was the group I traveled with. There was no hint of excitement in the air as we went to see where our ancestors died, by the thousands, for no reason except their religion. We were visiting Auschwitz/Birkenau.

The air on the tightly packed bus was filled with apprehension and a foreboding feeling was buried in between the nervous conversations still going on. And then, we saw the sign.

"Auschwitz/Bikenau, 2 km." I looked over at my friend Lidor, who was sitting next to me, and saw he was staring at the sign as well. He noticed my gaze after a while and looked my way. "Strong," he whispered distracted by his own trepidation. I nodded, my throat too tight to speak. As we slowly drove into the gates and saw the train tracks and barbed wire, my heart pounded with a very inappropriate excitement. This was where it happened.

Our tour guide was a bubbly blond, rather, she looked like she had the potential to be bubbly, but one supposes that when employed at an ancient Nazi concentration camp, she learned to keep her inner impulses subdued. We began the tour at the gates. "*Arbeit Macht Frei*," "Work Brings Freedom." The sign welcomed us, as it had many others decades ago, and an angry silence hushed our group. We moved into one of the buildings that was set as an exhibit. We spent about two hours learning of the history of the Holocaust, the evidence that proved it happened, and the six million people that were killed. We were constantly reminded by our guide that not only Jews perished in the Holocaust. Poles, gays, gypsies, political prisoners; they all fell victim to the Final Solution.

We passed a lot of tour groups on our way to the Auschwitz Death Wall. As I tried to focus on the faces, I saw instead what my eyes were about to see. Lidor walked beside me holding my hand as we passed more barracks. More prisons. I shoved my sunglasses hastily on as we took a swift left. We stepped into a sort of courtyard—but there were no trees or flowers—just stone and a wall, adorned with a number of fake floral arrangements and gifts to the dead.

The silence was dense and oppressive. We saw at least twenty people, either crying or gawking at the wall in front of us. Because we all knew. They had been marched here. Led by an SS officer in full uniform. They were lined up, naked, against the wall, and shot. The wall looked darker than most of the surrounding stone. Blood? Maybe. Lidor moved past me and pulled me with him. We both reached to the ground at the same time to pick a small stone. I felt the tear hit my sunglasses. As I brushed off the wave of tears that threatened to overtake me, I kissed the rock and set it in a crack in the wall. Lidor did the same. We turned and walked away. Away from the sadness that a little stone had caused deep in our hearts.

We continued on to the next building. In it we were treated to photographs of various victims. Names and faces swam around us on the walls. There were just so many. Too many. We saw where they had slept, eaten, washed, worked. Died. Everyone was beyond words. I stood at the window, the cool breeze hitting my face. I remember the air smelled fresher than it should have on that day. On any day in Auschwitz. It was a terrible feeling to have when I knew millions had and never would feel that moment. Liberation. Freedom. Life beyond bondage.

The tour moved on. We saw a room filled with suitcases, a room with shoes, a room stuffed with trinkets and personal effects. All without an owner. All small reminders of what had once been. Many people in our group had begun to cry. Silent tears now, only sadness for those lost. Heartbreak at what they'd left behind. I drifted behind the group, now staring at a model of Auschwitz made of plaster, complete with bodies and SS officers, also made of plaster. There was an exhibit across the room that showed at least three hundred cans of Cyclone Z. Poison gas.

I felt my toughness break as I traveled alone to a single room off the main hall of the building. There was a single display case. Inside were children's garments. I lost everything I had been fighting and allowed the tears to come. I wasn't going to look over when I sensed him next to me, but I heard small sniffles and sighs. Lidor was crying. We embraced and he held me tightly to him. His grip was so rough, I felt my heart pang for him. Finally, we looked at each other, both with puffy eyes and tear stains on our faces. I was lost in his eyes, so black and emotional, he made the moment so dramatic. So much worse. We walked away, holding hands and hoping the worst was over. It wasn't.

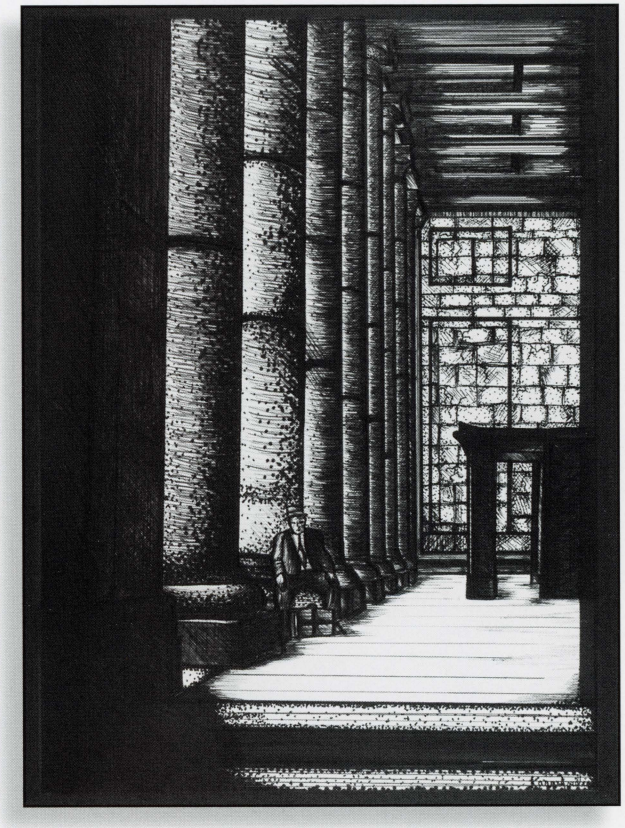
The crematorium was a large brick building that seemed to open up to the sky. It seemed unnaturally still as we walked across the lush grass to view it. Our guide spoke a little about the things that went on during the war here and asked we be silent in the crematorium out of respect for those who died there. We filed in, and I noticed how eerily quiet and quick everyone was. We were all anxious to see them. In my haste to find the gas showers first I walked quickly past the guide and into the adjoining chamber. I stopped dead as I caught Lidor's stare. I was standing directly under one of the gas showers. He pulled me away so quickly I didn't even have time to investigate the rusty shower piece. I caught the look in his eye. He shook his head at me and we pushed on.

The next room would've probably been a fairly spacious room, that is, if 10-20 ovens weren't taking up all the room. Silent tears found my face and I walked to an oven and touched it. Felt how cool it was after not being used for decades. I sat on the ground next to an oven and played with the glass absent-mindedly as others came into the room.

A camera crew came in; they'd been appointed the job of taping our every movement for a documentary. I noticed a bright light coming towards me as the crew rounded on my hiding spot. The light shone against my back as they taped me. Lidor grabbed my hand and led me out. We sat on the steps of the nearby barracks as the rest of our group came out. We were finally told the tour was over. Everyone's faces, previously etched with fear and horror, were now lined with thin smiles, products of our relief.

"Good," he whispered, more to himself than to me. I took his hand and stepped closer to him.

"*Todah Hashem*." Thank God, I whispered back in Hebrew.



-Kara Anderson

I Once Met a Weasel

Nicholas Swisher

I once met a weasel,
I shook its little hand.
It greeted me with words
that I could not understand.
None-the-less we talked some more;
I made some funny jokes.
But then that weasel squealed on me
and told so many folks.
I now live within padded walls,
and take a lot of pills.
"It's good for you," say men in white,
"The weasel's what it kills."

But no matter how long
I stay within those walls.
Or no matter how many
pills they drop into my jaw.
That weasel always comes to visit
for my torment it is after.
And always when it looks at me,
it screams the loudest laughter.

Luminescence

Erin Perkins

The sky is midnight blue
still and strong
Stars gaze down like shining eyes
and she gazes back
Big Blues glistening
with the sky
Staring them down from
their lofty height
wishing they could stare back.
And if they could
would they see beauty?
And if they could see beauty,
could they see her?
And if they could see her,
could they find her eyes
like Stars?
Shining bright, Luminescent.
Could they see the beauty
she saw
reflected in the sky,
Glistening bright, constant
like Stars.

Fading Faith

Lee Heazel

Fuel injected directly into the engine, increasing its roar even further. As the contraption and its technological companions strained to take their cargo ever higher into the sky, the sound of their ascent rattled among the buildings below.

It was a common sound in the city, one that Ansui had once considered alien but had since grown accustomed to. He had lived here for the grand majority of his sixty-some years, and only recently had he to cope with the stress of city life. The sprawling metropolis had seemingly sprouted out of the earth around him over the past decade, as had many other cities in his prospering country.

Before the urban development, it was a small, peaceful town, little more than a few houses and a monastery. Pilgrims flowed through with notable frequency, seeking the monks within for help with spiritual fulfillment, advice, or to pay homage. Simpler days, more peaceful days, better days.

A new sound reached his ears as he traveled the dusty sidewalk, familiar words spoken by a familiar voice. It emanated from a nearby store, one of the few in this neighborhood still open, that he had been approaching. The voice grew louder as he grew close, and soon he was face to face with an old colleague of his. Daizan stared back at him from a dozen different flickering directions as he continued to preach about the finer details concerning the Eightfold Path.

Ansui stood for a period of time, he did not keep track of how long, as his one-time peer continued his impersonal lecture. Finally, with a sigh, Ansui moved on. Daizan had made a wise decision to embrace modern technologies in an attempt to spread his faith to the next generation, but interest was low. Word had reached Ansui that the fruit of his colleague's ambition had begun to rot and would soon to be replaced by one more colorful yet less nutritious.

A few storefronts away stood several young men, milling about beside the road, sporting the clothing style that seemed to be of more popular fashion among the youth nowadays. At Ansui's approached, the teenagers took notice and encircled him, barring his path.

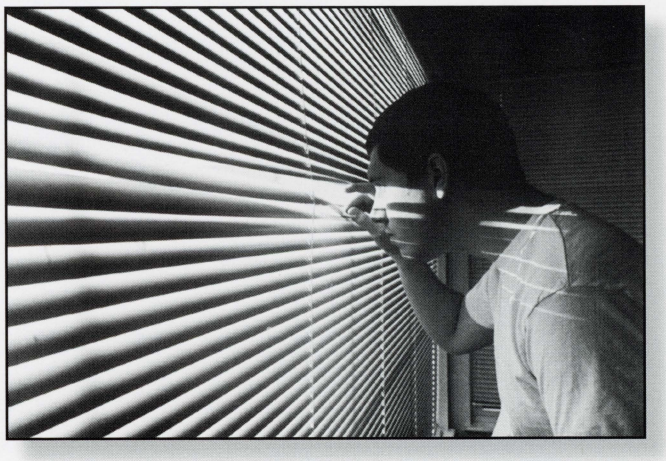
"Where's your money, old man?" The youth spoke in clipped Cantonese, an accent from a different region.

"I live a life of indigence. There is no money I have that is my own."

"If you wanna go any further, you'll pay the toll," another boy spelt out to him.

"If you please, my monastery is just a few blocks away. If I could…" A fist to the gut cut off Ansui's plea, doubling him over. Additional beatings forced him to the ground, where a few demeaning kicks were delivered to drive the point home. Ansui was able to glance upward during his brief beating. Above him stood faces of varying emotion: glee, duty, greed.

It was over in a few seconds, as the youths quickly tired of beating someone unwilling to defend himself. "Come back when you can afford the toll, old man."



-Nicole Galanakis

Prague (For Bethany)

Harold Shaffer

On the Charles Bridge late at night
the pure moon drifts like a question mark.
My thoughts wander where
couples gather beneath fluorescent light
above the illumined Old Town.
There is no sound
other than the steady swish
of the Vltava washing across the curbs

distilling my thoughts of you
to a bare April day in Baltimore
when your restlessness burst forth
like a crocus through frozen earth
to bloom in the gaze of love.
The warmth destroyed the chill;
you became your destiny.
Your face spoke of innocence
but the smoldering in your eyes
went beyond poetry
to reveal a soul of many lives.

-Megan Porter

There is nothing I could know, or name, or say
to capture the precise moment of clarity,
so detailed and hopeful.
How can I articulate awareness
invisible to discovery,
a knowing beyond the senses?
Even words in rhythm imperfectly reflect
the joy of a soul awakening.

I find a rail to lean against
above the ancient river.
I feel the heart of my divided child
who chased the moon and sun
to wholeness.

Here on the Charles Bridge
in another world away,
the moon drifts like a question mark;
the sun rises in answer.

The Esh

Gina Ferrara

-Natalie DiPalo

The horrid Esh
lurches through the stagnant yard
waiting for twilight to dissolve
howling
for night to permeate his sickened longing.
In exquisite night
The Esh creates
crude and sour winds
distorts the minds of children
purrs, purrs, inside their ears
bends their purest thoughts.

Will I take form
will I soften into being
until my hollow sockets
articulate your deepest sorrows?
Oh, yes.
my black shroud
my floating tremendous figure
my gaunt, wan hands
my infested skull
they are my happy lovers
You are my lovely one.

iSOLATION

ANONYMOUS

My lovers are smooth cases of silicone flesh,
I slip them caresses under the eyes of day,
I touch them in the electric dusk
And wait for dark.
My feet brush alien against each other
Like strangers.
I grip my lovers tightly as they whisper their love,
Yet I am alone.

My mothers are deaf and blind but they are not silent,
Their incessant flow of staccato comfort
A doppelganger of
Dripping barren darkness.
These parents, bought in a live wire maze,
Guide my thoughts,
Weave a bezoar of their regurgitated conceptions,
So I am alone.
…

My daughter is a child returned to the womb
As we glide together down fallopians of light
In our steely egg,
Yet I am severed.
Her placenta feeds the leeches to her ears.
She is deaf to me,
Though in our dark world there is nothing but voices,
So I am alone.

GHETTO MENTALITY

ANTHONY GAYLE

Shots:
jump, rum or gun.

Or rapping to the beat of a drum.

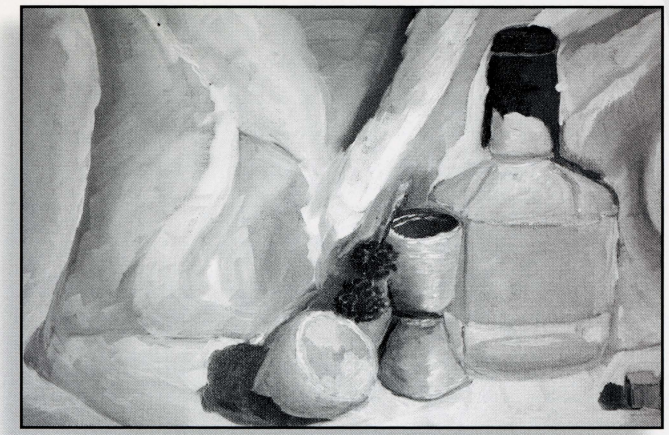
Some weed smoke snaking through the vents
or a piss-filled Corona at the bottom of the steps.

I know what they think—
the stink of trash bags in the hallway,
teeming with life,
ripe
and ready to burst.

Or a slow-moving procession of mourners
with the deceased pictured on their shirt.

Considered a blight
on-sight,
they loiter around strip malls like porch steps
while women carry plastic shopping bags
and the kids that cling to their legs.

I know what they think:
hood hair dryers, curling irons, the kitchen sink,
clientele dressed in neon green or pink;
They think we live in a place where maraschino cherries
are considered fresh fruit
and beef with broccoli represent two of the essential
food groups.



-Jayce Flickinger

They think they have nothing to do
with a place
where golden labs became pit bulls,
chiseled and bandana'd like their owners,
unleashed and roaming;
A place where loaning
seldom leads to owning
and the sounds of late-night moaning come in better
than the radio.

They think they have nothing to do
with the processed hair and food;
That we are genetically predisposed
to high blood pressure
and low IQ,
but I know what they think.
Motivate him with a carat and whip,
take him to one of his rickety peers
and invite him to drink.
Pat him on the back
and leave him teetering on the brink.
So when the outcome is grim,
we won't see a murder,
just a nigger who couldn't swim.

WATCH

JAMES CURRAN

Her face keeps me in line
It does not let me stray
As she holds me by the wrist
To guide me through the day
Her heart is always true
A soft consistent beat
Her two hands show direction
From awakening 'til sleep
From morning to the evening
Her simple one, two, threes
Ground me to a guided path
Not cast me to the breeze
Though I want to take her to my bed
I know that it's not right
So she waits there by my bedside
As I drift off for the night.

A Childhood Token

Christine Ivory

As far as rings go, the one I value most hardly appears significant. It's a small band, about a millimeter thick except for a slight widening at the top where the metal displays several decorative grooves. There are no jewels or engravings; though it is fourteen karat gold, it is neither pompous nor assuming. These days, the ring barely slides past the first joint on my pinkie, despite the length and narrowness of my fingers. I was two when I was given the ring, though I was not allowed to possess it continually from such an early age. My mother would allow me to wear the delicate little band for special occasions only, afraid I would mistake the tiny gift as edible. My childhood is marked by occasions for which I was allowed to wear my ring. I remember twirling it on my finger going to Easter mass and losing it in the grass. We missed the service looking for the trinket, which was found by a kindly stranger taking pity on the girl in the grass, dirtying her Sunday best. I also wore the ring on the carousel for my fifth birthday, the metal of the ring clinking merrily against the horse's metal support, like the tinny organ music. There was also the dilemma of the white lace gloves I adored as a child, and how they'd conceal the ring if worn on top, but looked foolish with the ring on the outside. I still save this ring for special events, though it currently adorns a chain around my neck. The main difference now is that I decide for myself what constitutes a special occasion… that, and I don't think my mother's worried about me eating it anymore.

-Kellie Gable

Surrogate

Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz

I sit at the tide's edge and let my eyelids fall, for vision clouds
the Ocean's power. The Waves' plummet causes
each nerve ending to tingle when his water droplets
evaporate. The Water's retreat tries to claim me
prisoner, and clothes tangle with limbs
as I tumble in the surf. Salt pricks my tongue.
Cries for my deployed lover
have evaporated with the sea's kisses.

Louise

Stefani Beser

Sometimes I think of your life and I
Want to cry for your lack of good luck.
I mourn for your early passing, yet
I know a human can only take so much…

Losing your fiancé in Korea
The day before discharge
Losing your husband in your drive way
The week before your daughter's birth

Floors to scrub
Kids to feed
Bills to pay
On just two feet

Declining in health (slowly, but surely),
Choosing between your insulin and utilities

You were a professional climber of life's mountains.

And I don't know if there is an afterlife,
But I like to think that
Now you've found your four leaf clover.

The Soldier's Wife

Virginia Petrucci

Edra could feel that a letter was coming today. Her heart raced, her blood turned pirouettes in her veins, and she could hear the footsteps of the nice postman coming up her walk although it was only ten in the morning. She stroked her ring and thought of Stanley. Her husband was tall, with soft brown rabbit eyes. She had never heard him raise his voice to anyone, and he approached conflict with a calm and sturdy resolve. Edra thought of the way his hair flopped to the side, and the secret grey patch in the back that she couldn't bring herself to mention. After all, what healthy individual grays at thirty-two?

Her husband was not fit to fight. Behind his tall stature was a slouch, his eyes hid a flame of self-loathing, and his mild manners were the tendencies of a submissive male. She knew in her heart what most wives never admit to themselves—her husband was weak. To think of the War—well, it was best not to speculate. She relied thoroughly on his letters, which were filled with literal observation and, despite the circumstances, a kind of grim humor.

The phone startled Edra back into the room, and she watched it carefully. She made the sign of the cross over herself, took a deep breath and went to answer it.

"Hello? Oh, Sally," she exhaled, "Yes, I'm all right...of course... when—tonight? It's frightfully early for that, don't you think? No, let's say eight...I don't want to be out past twelve. Ok...I will...don't be late this time! Cheers."

It had only been a week since Sally's husband left for the States on the abstract excuse of business. Mrs. Henry Samson—to think of her friend burdened by such a title! Edra remembered her own wedding day (had it really only been two years?) and the brash way Sally chastised her for giving up her freedom, proclaiming at the reception that she would never let any man call her wife. But that was before she met Henry and discovered that her love could be easily purchased with the right silk dress.

When Sally arrived, Edra was deciding between lipsticks. Should she use the pink? It was the perfect shade of female modesty, just enough to fill out her thin lips. Or should she—could she?—wear the red, a cheeky cosmetic that she had never used because of its sheer audacity?

"Edra darling, where are you?" Sally's sweet ice cream voice filled the house. She never knocked or rang the bell. Edra looked once more at her choices. She decided that next to Sally, the pink would pale in comparison. She snatched up the red lipstick and smoothed it over her mouth. Her rouged lips lit up her pale face, and she felt that she could spit firecrackers if she wanted. She smiled, gathered up her purse and scarf and—oh, why not!—splashed some extra dark perfume against her neck. The scent reminded her of moons and of night.

Sally had the swagger of vodka about her. She was far too dolled, but one expected as much. Her dress was tropically pink, with large silly ruffles around the collar. Her feet wore matching pink heels with little bows behind each ankle. Her curly dark hair was coiffed to perfection, and her childlike cheeks had rosy blooms.

"Come!" Sally said, kissing Edra on the cheek. "The night waits, and he is not a patient man!"

As they left, Edra patted a letter sitting on the windowsill. It was from Stanley, and she would read it later, as a special late night treat.

The women took a taxi to the north side of the city, which Edra referred to as the clean district. They decided to go to their regular bar called the Beastie. The senior bartender, Charlie, was an old friend of Edra's father, and most of the staff knew them by their first names. When they arrived, the bar was almost full but decidedly quiet. People in business wear and young couples in bright sweaters talked seriously between themselves. Even the noises of glass and liquid were minimal.

"Eddie! Sal!" Charlie's voice boomed from behind the bar, dis-

turbing the layer of silence and turning several heads. "Hey... what'll it be girls? White Russians? Bah, why do I even ask? There's no one as routinous as Eddie."

" 'Routinous,' Charlie?" Edra threw him a sly smile.

"Yeah. Slave to the ol' routine. Look it up." He smiled back. "So how you been, kiddo?" he asked, his voice settling down. "How's your boy doing over there?"

"He's...well. He's doing well. Would you make my drink a double?"

"You got it. Listen, there's something I promised your old man right before...well, I'm to look after you. If you need anything...just think of me as your substitute old man. I know that compared to Frank—God rest him—I'd be a pretty lousy father, which is why I never had—"

"I'm fine, Charlie. I'm just really thirsty for a drink." She blinked hard, swallowed, then pretended to survey the room for familiar faces. Charlie nodded and went to fix the drinks. Sally was chatting up a young man whom she had coerced into a game of darts.

Charlie served Edra the drinks, and after much banter about whether or not any money was owed, Edra slapped some money down on the counter and scurried off, pleased with her victory. She was far too old to be accepting free drinks.

Sally was busy making a show out of her dart skills and had a circle of amused men around her. Although her game was poor, the young blonde man feigned a loss so that he could buy her a drink. Edra sat quietly amid all the flirtation, wondering when her dearest friend had transformed from a school-yard bully to a gentleman's toy. *Bar-courting*, she decided, *is no mere sport—it is a hunt.*

And so the night wound itself away, composed of darts and dancing and drinking. Edra tried a few rounds at the dart-board. Had the presence of one woman, the pink and drunk Sally Samson, really transformed the entire place into such a party? After several hours slipped by unnoticed, Edra decided that it was time to take her friend home. She was far less intoxicated, and even if she weren't, Sally's judgment wouldn't hold up against her own.

Sally's house was only a ten minute's walk away, but the mean winds of autumn pushed them back with a distinct willfulness. Edra's long white dress pressed against her, outlining her slender frame. Sally began to fuss about the cold, and how they should have taken a taxi like she suggested. The wind was growing, and it was hard to move forward without squinting. Just then, Edra's white scarf unwound itself from her neck and a strong spit of wind carried it off. Edra gasped as the scarf entangled itself in the branches of a tree, and then flew clear across the street only to land on the front of shiny parked car. A man emerged from the driver's seat and pinched it off of his window. He turned and looked at Edra, holding it out in his gloved hands.

"Oh, isn't that nice?" Sally tittered, and started across the street. Edra stood, fixed to the sidewalk, her hand still grasping her naked neck. Sally turned around, grabbed Edra's hand, and pulled her out into the road, emitting little squeals as they crossed. Sally never could cross a road soundlessly. She always had to vocalize her queer excitement at being in such a minor peril, even if there were no cars in sight.

"I'm afraid, madam, that it is the season for mischievous scarves."

The man wore a dark suit and an Italian accent. He was tall and well-groomed, with a row of handsome teeth. Edra smiled and took her scarf back.

"I am Fabrizio."

Edra offered a handshake. He took her hand in his, folding it up within his dark fingers like a white napkin. He kissed the back of her hand. She felt a girlish thrill run through her.

CONTINUED...

Their gaze met, and she noticed the complex brown of his eyes: a Mediterranean heat sifted through them, but behind the first layer he carried a violent determination. His eyes were like little pools of hot chocolate with guns at the bottom. She shied away her gaze.

"I'm on my way to meet a friend. Would you care to join us?"

Sally nodded and grinned, but Edra shot her a cautionary glance. It was late and she was tired, not to mention the fact that she had to look after Sally.

"The bar is just around the corner," Fabrizio added reassuringly. "Come."

His voice made Edra tingle. As he started up the road, Sally leaned into the strange man, loosely locking arms with him. Edra frowned at this, and decided that perhaps it was her duty to rid the gentleman of Sally's affections. She followed.

The bar was a sleek affair, with mirrors on the ceiling and dim, red lighting. There were few people, as it was almost two in the morning. The bar was still, like Beastie's had been, but was filled with a different kind of quiet. The handfuls of people sat in booths, leaning over what seemed like scheming conversations. Nobody sat near the bar. Edra and Sally stood in the doorway, eyeing the scene with school girl apprehension.

"May I buy you a drink?" Fabrizio asked Edra.

"Oh, thank you, but that isn't necessary," Edra said, looking at the floor.

"What do you like?" Fabrizio leaned into her, ignoring her response.

"A Wh—Black Russian. That is, if you don't mind." She turned to Sally, whose hand was stifling a giggle. "Oh, hush! It's just a stupid drink."

"Right."

The two women found a booth in the corner while they waited for the drinks. It was the first time since marrying Stanley that Edra had gone out without the escort of her husband. She fidgeted with her skirts and looked at Sally, whose wedding ring glistened and winked at her. It was the perfect representation of marital luxury: a platinum ribbon with a prominent cluster of jewels that sealed her identity as Henry's bride. She looked down at her own ring—a simple gold band, no diamonds, no stones—the epitome of her life as Mrs. Fig. It was a mutual decision to keep their wedding and their rings plain, as neither she nor Stanley were prone to excess. Edra had always prided herself on her practicality, and she felt that her ring was a reflection of that. Still, she couldn't stop looking at Sally's left hand. There was a peculiar life inside that ring, like candy laced with venom.

Fabrizio approached the booth with a companion who was holding two dark glasses, their ice clinking suggestively as he walked. His friend was a short, meaty man in his mid-thirties, with a shaved head and goat-ish little beard. Fabrizio put the drinks on the table and introduced his friend.

"This is Ivan." Ivan bowed. His smile made Edra uneasy. Fabrizio sat down next to her, and pushed the glass against the back of her hand. She started from the cold, and took a slow sip. Now that he was closer, she noticed just how old he was—two wrinkles grew out of the corners of his eyes when he smiled, and little white sprouts mixed in with the sneaky stubble on his cheek. His head was a garden of rich black and jumping white. Stanley's ash blond hair made it harder to notice the grey spots, but Fabrizio's seemed to proclaim his age to the world without apology. He had to be at least forty years old, a full fifteen years her senior.

"Lefty?" Fabrizio asked, pointing at Edra's drink.

"What? Oh, yes, I am," Edra blushed, quickly putting it down.

"Don't be shy. I think it's sexy." He handed her the glass.

Edra finished the drink while Fabrizio stared.

"There are quirks in everyone. I like to discover them. Now,

let me refill that glass." He excused himself and went up to the bar before she could properly protest.

Ivan had his arm draped across Sally's shoulders, his hand crawling along the ruffles of her collar like a roly-poly. Edra marveled at her friend's ability to shoo away the guilt that would consume the average woman. She felt a tinge of jealously for the carelessness with which Sally acted and the sheer selfishness that governed her every decision.

When Fabrizio returned, he asked Edra if she had ever visited Italy. No, she hadn't, but would perhaps like to spend a summer week in Venice. Sally, having downed the last of her drink, decided to recount her honeymoon in Rome, and blurted the story out so quickly that the words spilled across the table. Everyone sat for a full minute, watching their laps. Ivan, clearly undisturbed by the fact that he was wooing a married woman, turned and kissed her. Edra made a clicking sound with her tongue and tried to focus on the ice in her glass.

Fabrizio moved closer to her, and his cologne overpowered her senses so that she tasted the strange, wooden scent when she took a sip from her glass. He moved closer still. Edra turned her head to the wall. Its black surface was polished so thoroughly that she could see her own face in it. Her cheeks were flushed. Then there was a sudden feeling of damp, soft lips on her neck. Alarms rang throughout her nerves and Edra sat rigid, like a stunned deer, watching Fabrizio in the mirror of the black wall. Then it was over.

He had kissed her, that was all. And not on the lips, certainly not. Perhaps it was just an Italian peculiarity. Yes, that was it—a Mediterranean gesture of friendship. Still, she would not look at him. The bartender suddenly appeared at their table and announced something that she couldn't understand. She looked at Fabrizio, full of confusion, and he reassured her that the bar was only closing.

"We can't have that, can we love?" Ivan laughed and kissed Sally again. "C'mon, I'll take you dancing."

"No." Edra protested. It seemed to her that Sally had had enough dancing for the evening. "We really must be going."

"Oh, pish-posh," Sally threw her voice across the bar. "I am quite suitable and within myself and I just...I just need....a drink. Yep." Ivan caught her arm as she tried unsuccessfully to stand. He began to guide her to the door.

"Don't worry. Ivan is a gentleman," Fabrizio looked at Edra with wide, serious eyes. "Let's go someplace quiet, away from these two." When she stood, she found that her head pounded heavily. Some fresh air will do me good, she decided. Outside, she looked around for her friend. The night was too quiet for Sally to be nearby—Ivan must have stolen her away.

They walked for half a block. Fabrizio's arm was snuggly around her waist, and he followed her zigzagging gait. The cold air began to have a sobering effect on her, and she realized that she wasn't completely sure where she was.

"Where are we going?" she asked. "I need to get back to Todd Street."

"Why the hurry?" Fabrizio stopped, pulling her against his chest.

"I'm tired," she sighed, and shut her eyes. He kissed her forehead. Again with that Italian friendliness! She tried to move away.

"No one is watching," he whispered against her cheek, his hot breath filling her ear.

"No one except God," Edra replied, gesturing sleepily at the stars. She watched his eyes. They were too dark, and she could see the guns inside them. Fabrizio pressed his waxy palm against her throat, and his fingers almost wrapped entirely around her neck. He forced his lips against hers. "What God?" he murmured.

Edra stepped back, bumping against a lamppost. She wanted

CONTINUED...

to refuse. She wanted to tell him, once and for all, that her evening was finished and so was their acquaintance. She wanted to boast about her brave soldier, her loving Stanley. But the words would not come, and all intentions of refusal ended just as they started—unspoken in the basement of her mind. He took one long step forward, and then he was upon her.

Each kiss was rough and scolding, and his claws never left their grasp on her throat. There was a disconnect between Edra's mind and her body, and she felt herself operating against her own will. No, she thought as furiously as she could. But look—wasn't that her arm around his shoulder? No, no. She did not want this man. But there—wasn't that her hand toying with his shirt buttons? Each kiss brought her passion closer to his, until she was no longer Edra Fig but some wild, glamorous being. She felt her humanity shedding away until she was standing naked next to the lamppost, a core of feral pulp.

"I'll drive." Fabrizio's voice seemed distant, and when she opened her eyes, she discovered that the world had dressed itself in a milky fog. She looked down at herself. Her clothes were still intact. Fabrizio started leading her to his car.

"Nnnuh!" She protested.

"Yes, my dear, for my place is warmer than the sidewalk." He unlocked his car and opened the passenger door. "Now won't you get in?"

Edra plopped herself inside, glad for the chance to rest. She shut her eyes, and her mind instantly slipped away. When she awoke, Fabrizio was patting her shoulder and trying to get her out of the car.

"I thought you wanted me in the car," she mumbled, her eyes still half shut. The raw pink face of morning was spreading across the sky. Was it dawn already? Edra allowed herself to be led out of the car and, when she fell over, to be carried up the stairs.

When they reached his apartment, he led her to the bedroom. They were both tired, and their passion for one another was waning in favor of sleep. Neither cared to dress the little deed in ceremony, so Edra got under the covers without taking off her clothes. Fabrizio took off his pants and joined her, shoving her dress up to her thighs. She rolled onto her back, and wondered about Sally.

When Edra woke up, the phone was ringing and so was her head. She groaned, and rolled over only to find that the bed was empty. She sat up and, although the forces of gravity seemed magnified, got out of bed. It was light outside. She didn't want to know what time it was, for it was certainly not a decent hour to be waking. She wanted desperately to shower, for her hair was in knots and she bore a scent of sour leather. She walked to the door, resolved to find Sally. She paused. The night was beginning to unfold itself, piece by awful piece. She had come on her own terms, without Sally. What was his name, anyway? She struggled to remember, then decided that she would rather not know.

Her purse was on the floor, and some of her coins sprawled under the bed. She left the coins, and made her way to the mirror. She was a dreadful sight—such bags under her eyes! Yet she had managed to keep her scarf on all through the night. She gathered her courage and walked silently down the hall, scarcely remembering her way around. She came into the kitchen, but nobody was there. A soggy plate of eggs sat on the little breakfast table, along with a note. Perhaps nobody was here, and she was safe after all. She read the note, still unsure as to whether or not she wanted to remember the essence of this man whose name she had forgotten.

I hope you like eggs. I'm sorry for leaving you this morning, but I have an important day of work ahead of me. Please don't wait for me, as I don't know how long I shall be detained at the office. You're welcome to take a shower, but if you use the toilet, please flush twice.

Fabrizio

Edra tore the note in two, then in four then in eight pieces. She had given herself to a man who didn't remember her

name, a man who expected her to believe that he worked on Saturdays, and a man whose toilet didn't function properly. She threw the paper on the floor and left.

Outside, the day was far too bright for her eyes. She hailed the first taxi she saw and asked to be taken home. The drive back took almost half an hour, and she kept her eyes closed for the whole ride. She didn't want to know where Fabrizio lived. She didn't want to remember any of the previous night.

Once she was home, Edra locked the doors and pulled down the blinds, arming herself against the sunlight. But some light from the front window peered through, illuminating yesterday's letter. She hesitated, then opened it.

My Dearest Edra,

Life is presently very good. I carry you with me in my thoughts and my heart—your picture is always inside my shirt. We were treated with a full church service, including communion, yesterday. I've been praying for an end to this war (although I'm sure not as hard as you). Mike (I think I told you about him in my last letter) has been taking care of a stray dog. I was at first worried that the dog would be a bother to us on camp, or would become too accustomed to us feeding him. But I admit I've grown fond of him ("Rascal", we call him), and even let him share some of my beans tonight. I know, I'm sure you'll worry that I'm not eating enough on account of some mongrel, but Rascal's really quite a gentleman once you get to know him. And you know how I feel about the bean diet we're on...what I wouldn't do for one of your cakes!

I love you, my angel. Soon this war will tire and I will be home. Until then, be safe, and try to have a bit of fun. Just watch over Sally when Henry's gone—you know how she can be.

Yours forever,
Stanley.

Edra embraced the letter, and collapsed under the weight of a silent sob. She lay on the floor, her frail tears pooling next to her face. Her sweet, loving Stanley. How could she have betrayed his trust? How could she bring herself to tell him... and should she? She sat up, her tears stilled by the decision. She couldn't burden him with it...but she couldn't bear such a thing in secret. She climbed the stairs to think it over in bed. When she caught her reflection in the bedroom mirror, she was filled with contempt.

Edra went to church the next morning. It was a miserable day, complete with rain, fog and lightening. Still, she arrived on time, and prayed heavily throughout the duration of the service. When it was time to go, there were beads of sweat on her brow. She knew what she must do.

She went though five drafts of her letter before she was satisfied with the first sentence. She needed to be honest, for the sake of their marriage. Divorce didn't even cross her mind—Stanley would never leave her, even if she repeated this scandal weekly. Their marriage was far beyond romance, beyond language itself. What she felt for her husband was buried deep in the secret animal parts of her brain, and was too sacred to describe. She started crafting the second sentence, checking it for perfection and poise when the phone rang. A slow, cold feeling slithered down her spine. What if it was Fabrizio? Certainly she didn't give him her phone number? She sat idly wishing for the call to die off. It didn't. She grew furious, suddenly, wildly furious. How dare he phone her?

"Hello?" she snapped. "Yes, this is she...what? He—what? Are you sure it's he...? Oh. Yes...yes. Goodbye." Edra let the phone slip out her hand, down to the ground. She watched as the cord strained and retracted, bearing the weight. They were flying his body home. Stanley. The phone began to cry at her like some awful, wounded thing, all nonsense and dial tone. She looked down at her simple gold ring. Had she ever mocked its glory? Her Stanley. She moved to the window. The storm had passed, leaving the sun to flirt with a cloudless sky. A faint rainbow stretched across the horizon, mocking her.

Since 1965 at Newport

James Curran

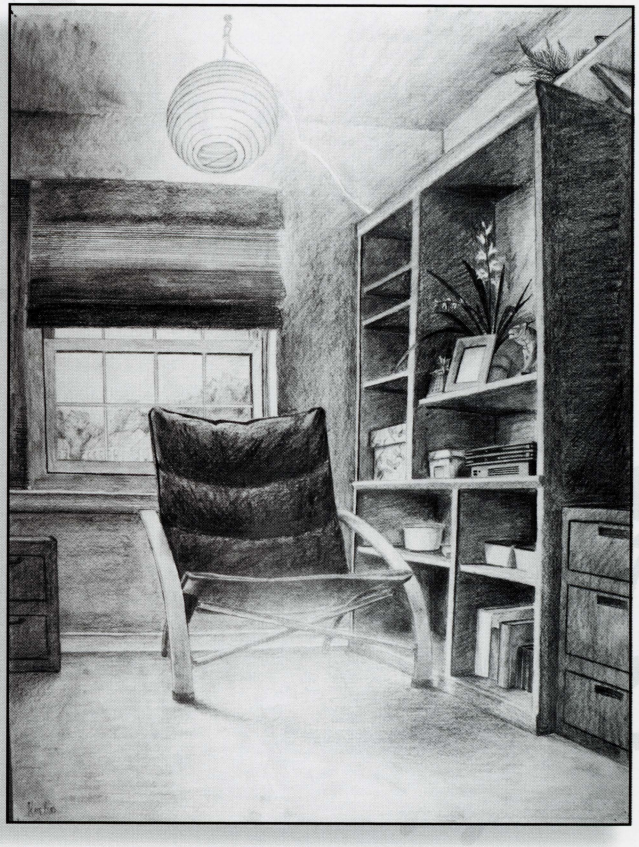
Since 1965 at Newport
When peace fell just like rain
When Dylan banged electric chords
And the crowd just screamed disdain
They ranted hate in hoards that day
The world hung by a thread
But he calmed them with acoustic rain
The past didn't die but oh, oh, oh how it bled.

Now the crayon box was changing
As they added black and brown
The schools they screamed til' they were raw
When the white doors were torn down
The Kennedy's, King's, and Lincoln's bones
Became a binding thread
The words remain, we all have dreams
The past didn't die, but oh, oh, oh, how it turned red.

Now unlike the shores of France that day
When we hoped we'd set men free
From the hate baked into some men's souls
That God hoped he'd never see
We prayed it all would end at Nuremberg
But swastikas still fly
With Crips and Bloods on city streets
The past didn't die and oh, oh, oh, can we still pray?

We prayed to priests but they slept with boys
And politicians did so too
And they created wars with dollar signs
And the news soon aired the proof
And we sent our food to Africa
But it failed to quell disease
The past didn't die, and oh, oh, oh, my friend, can we be free?

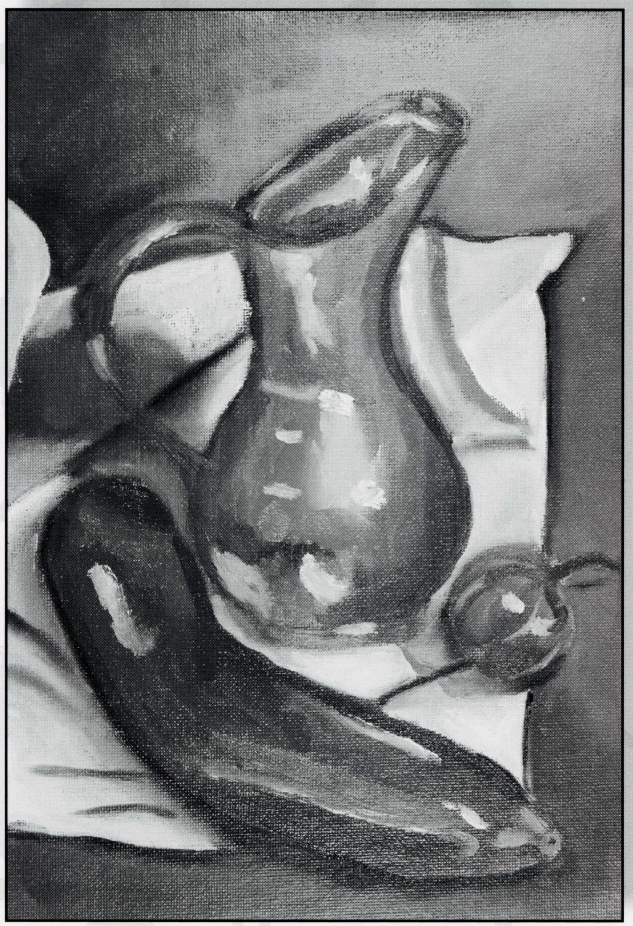
Will there be a day when flowers bloom
We won't wonder where they've gone
And the leaves of brown will turn to green
And they won't wither when they've gone
And the God we knew will change his mind
And learn to love again
And the past will die, and oh, oh, oh, we'll soon have hope again.



-Kate Botsford

Katharine Lee Bates, 2008

Stefani Beser



-Jillian Chaney

She awaits the bottle-nosed, worn silver
Wonder of engineering
As it is being refueled at the
Dawn of a summer morning.
The discomfort of the bland blue
Plastic leather chairs
Does not reach her excited muscles,
Let alone her humming bones.
She holds the paper ticket
In her self-sufficient hands.
Time, winds, and mathematically calculated
Angles are now all she needs to be moved
Against the jet stream.

West, they call it.

Sitting in the day-old atmosphere
Trapped in glass windows before the sun,
She can already feel the dry air
Giving and taking from her skin.
She squints her eyes in preparation
For the promise of clean daylight.
She sees the dust trailing from the truck tires
All along the prairie dirt road.

Purple Mountains Majesty, Amber Waves of Grain…

West, they call it?

Home.

WANTED

NICHOLAS SWISHER

Hunter's Creek sat between two plateaus: one to the east and one to the northwest. Between these and running straight through the town was the creek itself. Hunter's Creek had once been called the "Capital of Good Living" for its brothels and gambling houses. However, as towns started to appear on the edges of the frontier, many picked up and left. Now the town held only around fifty people, and many of the buildings were empty. The only place of "Good Living" left in town was the saloon. Miss Daisy owned the place and had done quite well for herself. Once a call-girl in a local brothel, Daisy bought the saloon with the money she had saved.

Four men sat in the corner table, one dealing cards to the others. The men picked up their cards and glanced at their hands. As the initial betting began, they started to gossip.

"You guys heard 'bout that fellow who rode into town yesterday?" One of the men whispered.

"You mean Six Gun? He's wanted for cold-blooded murder." They all shuddered in unison.

"Now why you s'pose he'd come round here?"

"I heard he's being chased."

"By the law?"

"Nah, someone else. Some young gun named Holt who's looking for revenge. Kills anybody that gets in his way."

"You thinking he'll come round here too, then?"

"Nah. Frankly, I bet he's dead already. A man living for revenge can't live for long."

Just then they heard the wood planks creak outside the door. They turned to see the saloon doors swing open to reveal a tall man wearing a Mexican poncho and a cowboy hat. The man walked over to the bar and sat on one of the stools. His face looked young, no older than twenty, but it carried plenty of scars.

"Water."

"Right away, cowboy." Miss Daisy grabbed a glass, filled it with water and placed it in front of him. "There y'are...water."

The man's hand reached under the poncho, and when he pulled it back out, he was grasping a leather pouch. He opened the pouch and took out a gold coin and placed it on the bar.

One of the other customers, a giant of a man, walked toward the cowboy. "Hey, buddy, that's some stash you're flaunting. I bet that bag is full of gold."

He waited for a response, but all he got was a silence that hit him like a smack in the face.

"Hey buddy, I'm talking to you!" As he gripped the cowboy's shoulder, he felt something press against his stomach. He looked down to see a revolver held by the cowboy, who was still nonchalantly sipping his drink. "Why, you..." The giant started to pull his gun out of his holster, but before his hand even reached it, the cowboy had pulled his trigger three times. The hulk dropped to the floor. The cowboy sighed and pulled another coin out of his pouch.

"Here's something for the mess and a room."

"Ye...yeah, sure," Miss Daisy stammered. "The room's upstairs, cowboy. First door on your left." The man stood and walked to the stairs.

"Hey, wait," she called. "What's your name?"

"Holt," he said, as he disappeared up the stairs.

The next morning Holt sat in his room, cleaning his revolver. It was a wonderful revolver, a Holt Cimarron 1851 Navy Revolver. With a seven and a half inch barrel, it weighed about two and three quarter pounds and carried a .36 caliber punch. It had been his father's gun. Holt had a deep respect for his father. His father had tried to raise him to be an honorable man, even though he hadn't exactly been on the right side of the law. In fact, he got himself into a good deal of trouble and had been involved with some pretty shady

characters. One of those characters was John Wallace. When Holt was fourteen years old, his father and John Wallace had pulled a heist, planning to split the money. Holt's father kept promising it would be the break they needed. The men hid the money after the heist and planned to return when things cooled down, but they got into a dispute about the split. Holt's father had agreed to a fifty-fifty split, but John Wallace claimed he deserved more. Six Gun killed Holt's father, and since that time Holt had trained and tracked Six Gun across the frontier. He was close now. He just knew Six Gun was here, in this very town.

Miss Daisy walked into the room carrying a platter of food. "I made ya' breakfast," she said, "Free of charge." She placed it on the table after he picked up his gun and holstered it.

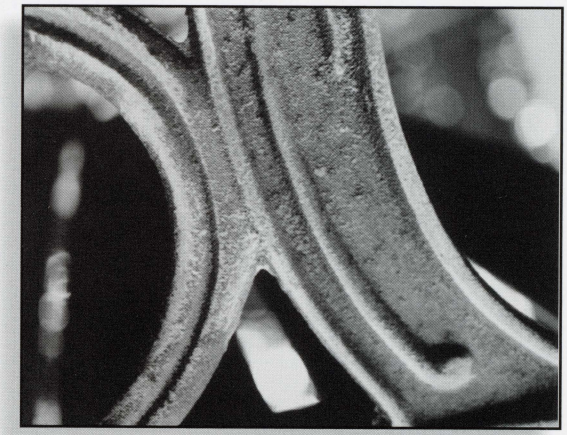
"You wouldn't happen to know of a John Wallace, would you?"

"Why sure," she replied, "The folks been saying he came into town about two days ago."

"Would you know where I can find him?"

"He's set up camp on the Northwest plateau. There's a trail that leads right to it."

"Thanks," he said, as he walked past her through the door. Outside, he mounted his horse and rode to the plateau. It wasn't a long ride, and he knew the trail led right to Six Gun. However, he took his time, his horse slowly ambling along. The walls of rock on each side of the trail were perfect for an ambush, and Holt had one hand ready on his revolver. A man holding a gun popped up from the rocks above him. Holt drew his weapon and fired. As the man's body fell down the rock face, he saw two more goons. Holt jumped off his horse and dashed behind a boulder. Bullets scraped the edges of the rock, zinging over his head. When he heard a break in the firing, he leapt up and took two shots, then ducked down before he even heard the thuds of their bodies. He waited to hear if there were more. When only silence greeted him,



-Michael Correnti

he rose from behind the rock. He walked up the path. As he turned the corner, he saw a man with a rifle lying up on the hill a hundred feet away. Holt lifted his gun and took aim. The rifleman took the first shot, but it whizzed past Holt's cheek. He had been too careless, hadn't taken his time. Holt fired his revolver and the bullet flew true, striking the man in the shoulder. He heard the scream of pain and saw the man drop his rifle. Holt ran to him.

"Where's Six Gun?"

"He ain't here," the rifleman said in a raspy voice. "He said he's sick of you chasing him." The rifleman chuckled and then began to cough. He continued, "He's waiting for you back at town. This is it. This is your chance, boy. You really think you can kill Six Gun Wallace? Ain't nobody out there faster or better with a revolver than him!" The rifleman barked out a laugh. "You gonna lose, boy! You gonna die!"

"Maybe, but not before you," Holt said as he brought his revolver to the man's forehead and pulled the trigger.

CONTINUED...

WANTED

CONTINUED

Back in town, the windows were shut and all the doors were locked. The only man outside was standing in the middle of the street. He wore a black shirt and gray pants; his long boots were made of some kind of reptile skin, and the spurs were large enough to get a buffalo moving. He wore a black hat with a red bandanna tied around it, and his eyes looked like an eagle's.

From the dust that blew in the distance, he saw a figure. As Holt walked closer, he threw his poncho into the wind. He stopped twenty feet from Six Gun, his hand twitching next to his holstered revolver.

"This is it, kid. You finally get your chance at me for killing your Papa."

"This is for more than just him; this is for all those others you've killed."

"Is it? –or is that just what you tell yourself?"

"Enough!" Holt said, a bit uneasy. Seconds passed that seemed like hours. Both held their hands hovering above their guns. A crow perched upon the barbershop roof launched itself into the air. The two men pulled their revolvers fast as lighting. Both fired a shot, but only one sound was heard.

A sigh escaped Six Gun's lips as he looked at Holt, who lay on his side, his gun still pointing at Six Gun. Six Gun fell forward, stirring the dust as he hit the ground. Holt rose to his feet and walked to the body. He reached down and untied the bandanna from Six Gun's hat, then tied it around his own. Miss Daisy ran out to Holt. "You did it, Holt!"

"Yeah, I did." He said, sounding disappointed.

"Well, what will you do now?"

"Leave," he said, and walked toward his mount.

A few days later, another young gun walked through Miss Daisy's saloon doors. She got out a glass and cleaned it, ready to take his order.

"Do you know of a man named Holt?" the young gun asked.

"Sure, he just left town a few days ago."

"Dang it, I missed him."

"What are you doing looking for that man, cowboy?"

"He killed my father."

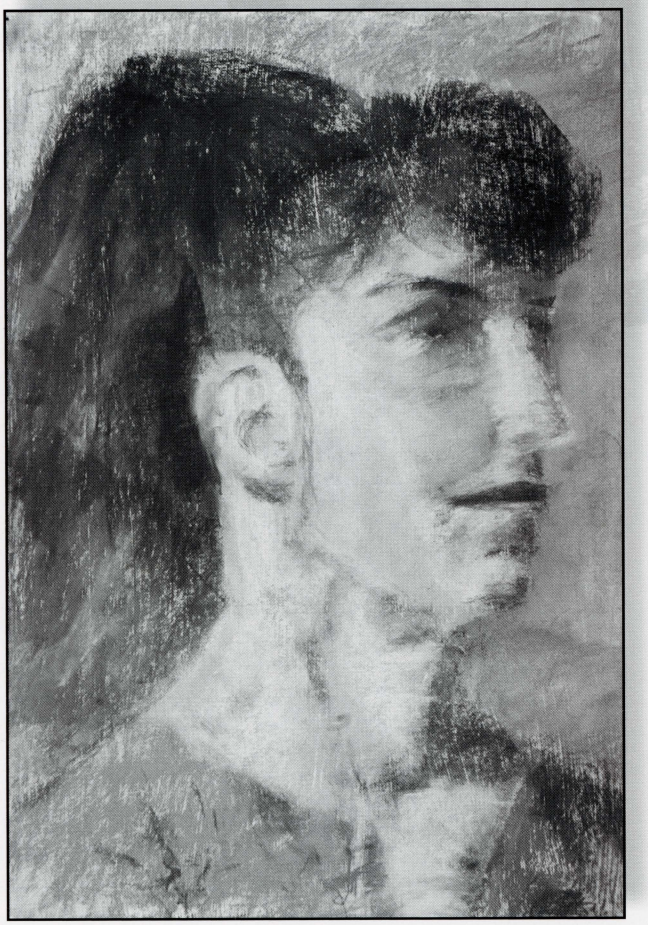
WALL STREET DEFICIT

DANIEL HIRSCHHORN

A river of moving legs.
Sirens screaming at gray air,
rebounding between brick and stone walls.
Skyscrapers, honking, and the lights of the
big city outdoors.
Watch out: someone has a knife!
Nobody in the gathering crowd cares,
but several jeer to encourage a killing.
It's rush hour on Wall Street.

Freedom Is...

Sarah Lane Warrenfeltz



-Rebecca Bleil

Freedom is to dance in rain at night,
To twirl around with arms free at my sides,
To splash in puddles to my heart's delight
Until my joyful energy subsides.

Freedom is to stop my dancing and
Look back to see you smiling at my play,
Feel your fingers lightly brush my hand,
Your lips on mine; my heartbeat runs away.

Freedom is to lose myself in you,
To run away with you, love, on your journey—
My past erased, my heart be cleansed anew—
To be with you, my soul is always yearning.

But loving someone means to let him go.
Let Freedom keep his freedom, this I know.

Fairytales

Anonymous

My love is fair as the lily flower,
His visage pale yet smiling ever –
But petals have not his beauty's power
Nor wings as light as insect's feather.

His eyes sparkle like drops of dew,
Glint mischief under cap's sharp brim –
My love will be forever true
And I have no thought but for him.

We flitter over fields in May,
We dance o'er clocks and wild primrose,
We love the sunlight of the day
And mourn when every night it goes.

Though darklings prowl in the world above
We're safe and free in the flowers, love.

-Caitlin Klimm

On Theatre

Gina Ferrara

In Light
there is no Metaphor,

but in dimness
there is Revelation.

Senses are more potent
when they're not as plainly seen.

Darkness

Elyse Chaprnka

Darkness takes seed in heart and mind,
Destruction will soon follow.
Hearts will disappear,
No light shall ever appear.

-Joi Botchway

NOTE

Harold Shaffer

The lilacs you worried about
came out
this morning.
I watched them forming.

You were right
in the morning light
they were beautiful.

I'm sorry you won't see them,
I cut them quickly
as I ran to the car—
I came back for the jar—
they're in my office now
just as beautiful.

The Persuading Pursuit

Daniel Seubert

His coat was originally tan but was now spotted with dirt and blood from time. It rippled as his arms motioned back and forth with the flow of his lower torso. The dust that his old black boots kicked up was a perfect match for the original color of the jacket. His hat was long gone, fell off during the beginning of his flight, and his long, greasy blonde hair grasped onto his scalp with every strength the hair follicles could muster; it appeared to be flames flowing off the back of his head as the head itself attempted to keep speed. Not only was his hair blonde, but had traces of fresh maroon coloring in it. His eyes were dark blue with tiny pupils, hiding from the merciless sun that only had just begun.

-Kate Botsford

Dust ricocheted from the fresh lead landings. There was plenty of reason for him to continue and an abundance of regret waiting for him to stop. It had only been a few days since he slipped up, and he should already be buried. His worn brown pants, with tears throughout from dragging along the ground, had no belt. There was an emptiness about his waist.

As he passed through a large puddle of mud, a chunk from his blonde mane was forced away from the rest and floated gracefully into the air. Mud splashed his already disheveled clothing and covered his scraggly, bearded face with more dirt than before. Regardless, he wouldn't stop.

On a hill, about five hundred feet in front of him, were twelve dangerous reasons to stop; the dozen were mounted and readied with carbines. As he went on, sweat began to bead on his forehead. However, this was not the same kind of sweat as that that perspires from physical exertion. No. This sweat was that of impending doom.

His coat would never have such a journey again. Behind him was hell and in the distance before him was a method to breach the gate. Inside his head, wisdom, and inside his chest, heart. Through both his fuel was draining. His pants nearly ripped in half as his knees dug into the ground with full force. His chin exploded, coating his dark brown beard with maroon life. Teeth shattered from his mouth through his cheeks, and his nose flattened sideways. By the time the closest gatekeeper was upon him, the choice was mutual. What wasn't wanted before was now something worth begging for.

The Truest Words I Ever Wrote...

Tenae Smith

If we could go back in time,
to pick and choose our fathers
I would not choose you.
God would ask me,
why not this man, my child?

I would reply...
I have seen what this man will do;
he is full of broken promises and lifeless dreams.
He is uncompassionate and inconsiderate,
petty and ignorant.

Then God asks,
are you sure my child?
I will give you time to reflect.

I sit and think...
And re-evaluate my decision.
I tell God that I have changed my mind.

I will keep this man as my earthly father.
If he hadn't abandoned me,
ignored my calls,
killed my dreams,
and broken my heart,

I wouldn't be
the beautiful, strong woman
I am today.

Lovers' Grasp

Cara Schultz

The sea is bright with the moon's loving gaze
Her waves sparkling with watery stars
And I stand alone on the shore
—Waiting perhaps for a lover
—Or maybe a friend
Time goes by and I move to stand in her wake
Her waves surging up in greeting an old friend
Embracing me with cold hands
Leaving shivers to race through my body
And then I am caught
Warm arms wind themselves around my waist
Hot breath upon my ear, sends the cold away.
She and I withdraw from our embrace
Ever so slowly she retreats
—As if sad that I won't be joining her tonight.
With her gone, he and I take our leave
And I glance over my shoulder, bowing my head in respect
Silently giving thanks that I am loved on this plane.

An Odd Day on Gladius b

Joshua Bailey

On the space cruiser *UNSS Dauntless*, a young private prepared for duty. It was Private Kurt Jacobsen's first assignment as part of the United Nations Space Expeditionary Command, or UNSEC. UNSEC was created fifteen years ago after humanity first mastered faster-than-light space travel. Dedicated to the exploration and settlement of alien worlds as well as the hunt for fellow life, Jacobsen had grown up on UNSEC stories from the frontier. He had spent his childhood daydreaming about the first contact with life outside the solar system and the first space colonies orbiting alien stars. At the age of 21, with a degree in astrobiology and months of physical training, he was now preparing his gear to fulfill his childhood dream, heading towards a small planet orbiting a burned-out red dwarf star.

A voice spoke on the intercom. "All members of the Gladius b research team please board your designated landing craft." Jacobsen walked into the landing craft with the other members of the expedition and the ship jettisoned from the *Dauntless*.

As the ship grew closer and closer to the Mars-sized planet, Jacobsen witnessed a cratered and canyon-covered surface. Between the holes and cracks was a shell of dark purple latticework, an airtight ceiling for the ground underneath. Under the dim haze of the red dwarf twilight, small insect-like critters jumped into the air in unison, hovering to a slow glide guided by jets of fluid. Another young man, a lance corporal, approached Jacobsen. "See those trees? A long time ago this planet had a much thicker atmosphere, but it eroded away. The trees began to wrap themselves in translucent bubbles and eventually it covered most of the surface. . . . Those bugs we just call the little shitters. They just sit on the surface of the trees and suck juice all day until something scares them up."

The ship approached a port built above the organic greenhouse. Going inside, Jacobsen was met by a sergeant and a corporal. "I'm Sergeant Davis, this is Corporal Martinez, and today you're getting the run-down of how we work things on this planet." Walking to a porch on the subsurface of the forest ceiling, the sergeant explained the ecology of the planet, the current work and accomplishments of this base of operations, and the gear that he would need for the day's tour.

After gearing up, the team headed for a tour of the local terrain. All around them it was a poorly lit and humid rainforest. Strange noises echoed from the branches above. *Chet-chet-chet! Hep-heep-hep!* Private Jacobsen's thoughts were drowned out by odd chirps, whistles, and buzzes.

"Hey, Jacobsen! Watch this!" Martinez shot three rounds from his rifle into the ceiling of the forest. Quickly, the limp side branches of the nearby trees shot upward to investigate the sharp draft that arose from the bullet holes. They then locked together, shooting out branches and smaller branches until they could fill the gaps with a fabric of translucent purple fibers.

The group of three approached a cliff face of about 30 feet in height. "These are the local rapids. We've been trying to explore the expanse of this river for a while now. The satellites we have orbiting this planet indicate there should be a lake nearby, but we haven't been able to follow the flow without considerable risk to our team."

As they were walking along the side of the cliff, a portion of the cliff face fractured, sending Jacobsen splashing into the water and Martinez holding on to the edge by one hand. "Martinez!" Davis called out to Martinez and pulled him back on his feet.

"The rookie's in the water, sir," Martinez responded, and the two of them began running along the river, vainly attempting to catch up to Jacobsen, who was struggling to keep his head above the water. The private thrashed violently against the water, fighting the current to avoid being separated from his teammates. Letting go of his heavy backpack, he tried to grab the rocks, only to slide off of an organic slime. With one bad spin he was thrust against a row of jagged rocks. Pain shot up

his back and through his arms. The slime that covered his hands allowed his rifle to slip from his grasp and sink to the bottom of the rapids.

Jacobsen fought the muddy water until it slowed into a small lake. Quickly scurrying ashore, he checked his clothes to make sure nothing had attached itself to his body. He then checked his GPS. No luck; it was broken. Walking towards the trees inshore, he knelt down to catch his breath. A set of compound eyes appeared out of the water, drawing closer inquisitively towards Jacobsen. He jogged over to the bushes and hid, and the creature lost interest.

Again Jacobsen was surrounded by the odd chirps, buzzes, and whistles of this exotic rainforest. *Het! Het! Huff huff huff!* That wasn't one of the sounds that Jacobsen had heard earlier. He grabbed his sidearm and placed his finger on the trigger, his hands trembling. From an overhead branch a creature appeared, dark purple like the forest. It was an intimidating find. Its four legs connected a glider-like membrane, its hands possessed rake-like claws with a sickle-shaped pinkie. Its round head bore two pairs of eyes, one pair larger than the other, and two holes exhaling in and out heavily. It began wailing, a sound like a cross between a whistle and a blow horn. Betraying its prior camouflage, it began pulsating in bands of blue and white and arched its back.

Jacobsen slowly pointed his pistol at the beast. Sensing the threat, it lunged at him, knocking him to the ground. The private swung his right arm to shoot at the creature, only for it to slam his arm down and dig in with its claws. He punched the creature's muscular body and it bit at him, with rows of pulsating, shearing teeth at its head shredding the cloth on his helmet. A paw landed in front of Jacobsen's arm, the sickle grazing his arm and leaving a large gash. It then began to extend a strange tube from its body, expelling a putrid, acidic substance onto Jacobsen's shirt. Jacobsen grabbed his knife and slit the creature along its membrane. The creature recoiled in pain, still pulsating in blue and white. Jacobsen leapt back to his feet. Blue blood flowed from the creature's wound. It again began wailing its whistle-blow horn scream, arching its back. It shuffled its body up and down and Jacobsen began to slowly creep away, facing the creature.

This did not seem fast enough to the creature, which began a limping gallop towards Jacobsen. He swung his bloodied right arm and shot his pistol at the creature, hitting it square in the abdomen and rendering it dead. Walking up to its limp body, he couldn't help but be amazed at the structure of the beast. The teeth were on pads, with the roughness of an iron wire brush. The strange tube appeared to be some kind of esophagus. Looking towards the canopy, he saw the source of the creature's anger – its offspring, a small onlooker, grasping on the branch above. It looked at him, tilting its head like a young monkey, before scurrying out of sight.

Jacobsen then walked back to the beach, removing the acid-covered jacket and grabbing a small flare gun in one of the side-pockets. He shot it towards the sky, bursting through the canopy and leaving a bright blue glare overhead. All he could do now was sit and wait for help to arrive.

A minute later, a capsule-shaped craft broke through the canopy and hovered in position. The bottom opened, stabilizing the air pressure and dissuading the trees from covering the opening. A seat suspended from a chain fell from the capsule, and Jacobsen jumped in, recognizing it as the rescue pod of a UNSEC helicopter.

Once onboard the helicopter, Jacobsen was greeted by Davis and Martinez, who were glad to see him safe. Jacobsen sat down and an onboard medic began to dress his wounds. As the helicopter made one last pass over the lake, he could see the branches converging over the hole left by the capsule, large limbs first, then smaller branches, and finally a fabric of interwoven purple fibers covering the protrusion.

It was wonderful to finally be there.

The Irai

Stefani Beser

When you thank your lucky stars,
You thank the Irai.

The Irai are perpetually helpful
Naturally born superheroes,
Each the size of a gnat.

When your tires squeal and your breaks lock and your heart freezes as
You narrowly miss rear-ending the jerk in front of you

Your life and your car
have been helped and
Held to a halt
By billions of Irai—
Each clamoring to push your wheels,
All hoping to be martyred
As tire marks on the gritty road.

Yet, the Irai are an elusive bunch
(although they always travel in crowds).

A human glimpse ends with a blink,
And they are thought to be imagined.
The Irai are always on the move—

Rushing to burning buildings and broken heels,
To choking children and unzipped zippers.

Yes, the Irai are a generously, heroically giving group
Who also tend to eat their prodigious young.

Escape in the Sunset

Ashley Deaver

I love the light from evening skies,
a watercolor painting glitters in our eyes.
Something so peaceful from color beaming in,
a feeling of calmness, worries run thin.
A rainbow of orange, yellow, and blue,
a blanket of colors rests above you.
We could look up forever, get lost in a dream
into a place where it's not what it seems.
Let imagination take over your mind,
free your body of all tension inside.
Remember the days that made you smile,
forget the sad ones for just a while.
Find a place that makes you feel whole.
Take a minute and listen to your soul.
Fly away to a world undiscovered,
let yourself fall into the arms of another.
Just follow the brightly colored sky,
it will always be your friendly guide.
Go where you want, find inner peace,
Let yourself go and just release.

Goodbye Night

Justin Switzer

-Fran Miller

Stars will be missed
The gleaming black eye
With moonlight dancing
Behind each living breath

I will see you again
For time shall prevail,
And the stars will gleam
Brightly once more

To the delight
Of my beating breast
To find means of trapping
The night time sky

I would do so
Without waking thought

For you shall be
My burning gem
That tempts my own sapphires
In morning light

Oh, dreary night.

Guidelines for Literary Submissions for Spring 2010 Issue

The Stevenson University Spectrum is published during the spring semester.

1. Essays, fiction, drama, and poetry are accepted for consideration for publication. Please limit prose to not more than five double-spaced pages.
2. Submissions of original, unpublished work from SU students, alumni, faculty and staff are welcome!
3. Each entry must be submitted electronically as an e-mail or e-mail attachment. All submissions should be accompanied by the contributor's name, e-mail address, year in school, major and permission to publish in Spectrum.
4. NO NAME should appear on any page of the manuscript.
5. A panel of students will judge all submissions anonymously.
6. Copyrights for work published in Spectrum will revert to the individual authors.
7. Scholarship hours are awarded for attending meetings, workshops, and readings, and for each submission. (See Carol Sapora, Advisor).

Send submissions by e-mail to:

spectrum@stevenson.edu

or

Carol Sapora, Spectrum Advisor

csapora@stevenson.edu

DEADLINE: October 26, 2009.

Guidelines for Art Submissions for Spring 2010 Issue

The following types of artwork are welcome as submissions for publication in Spectrum:

1. Two dimensional artwork: paintings, prints (such as collagraphs, woodcuts, linoleum cuts, silk-screened work), drawings, photographs and collages.
2. Three dimensional artwork: sculptures or relief sculptures in any medium. Unfortunately, we cannot accept 3-D artwork too large to fit on a tabletop.
3. Electronic artwork: computer-generated artwork created in software programs such as Adobe illustrator or Photoshop. The artwork created in raster-based software such as Photoshop should have a minimum DPI (dots-per-inch) of 300dpi.

To submit visual artwork for publication in Spectrum, work must be submitted by the end of the Fall Semester.

- 2-D and 3-D artwork should be delivered to AC 237, the faculty office of Amanda Hostalka, Associate Professor of Art, by the end of the Fall Semester. Please put your full name, your phone number and your e-mail address on the back of each piece.
- Electronic artwork should be attached to an e-mail message sent to Amanda Hostalka, Associate Professor of Art at:

  aholstalka@stevenson.edu

  Be sure to include your name, phone number and e-mail address in the message.
- 2-D and 3-D artwork will be photographed, after which you'll be notified to pick up your art work.
- Copyrights for artwork published in Spectrum will revert to the individual artists.
- Scholarship hours will be awarded for each artwork submission.

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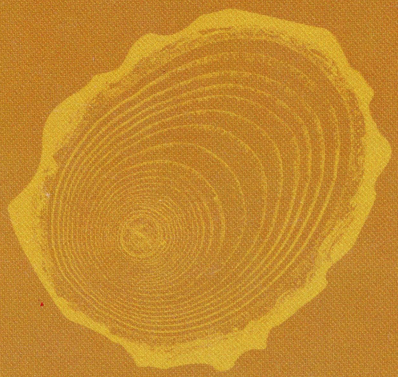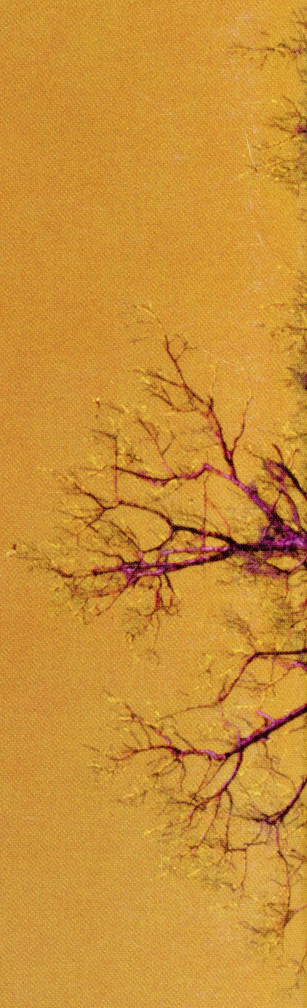
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